

Northwest Fisheries Science Center
2725 Montlake Boulevard East
Seattle, WA 98112-2097

November 19, 2003

Mr. Rod Sando
Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority
2501 S.W. First Avenue, Suite 200
Portland, OR 97201

Subject: : Request for Input to NOAA-Fisheries Technical Memorandums on the Effects of the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS) on ESA-Listed Salmon

Dear Mr. Sando:

The Northwest Region of NOAA Fisheries has requested that the Northwest Fisheries Science Center provide an update on impacts of the FCRPS on ESA-listed salmonids in the Columbia River Basin and a review of the relative fitness of hatchery and natural-origin salmon. This request was a result of the remand of the NMFS 2000 Biological Opinion and the likely need to revise that Opinion to address the Court's concerns. Our goal is to provide draft reports to the region by mid to late December. The purpose of this letter is to update you on the schedule and provide you with copies of the outlines for the documents (see attached) for distribution to your members, the fish and wildlife managers.

We will produce our updates in the form of NOAA Technical Memoranda. They will contain data and analyses based on information for stocks gained since we produced four "White Papers" (available on the NWFSC web site) in 1999 on: 1) "Passage of Juvenile and Adult Salmonids Past Columbia and Snake River Dams," 2) "Predation on Salmonids Relative to the Federal Columbia River Power System," 3) "Salmonid Travel Time and Survival Related to Flow in the Columbia River Basin," and 4) "Summary of Research Related to Transportation of Juvenile Anadromous Salmonids. We will not provide an update on predation work, but will address new data available relating to flow, survival, travel time, passage at dams, transportation, and SARs. In addition, we are developing two new Technical Memoranda, one on the effects of the FCRPS on the Columbia River estuary and plume, and another will be a review of the relative fitness of hatchery and natural-origin salmon.

Due to the schedule set by the judge for the remand, these documents are on a fast-track to meet the schedule. You are welcome to comment on the drafts and provide additional information for consideration for inclusion in the Technical Memoranda, which will be available by mid to late December. If you would like to provide information in advance, we request that the information be sent to me by 5 December 2003. If your organizations provide information we ask that they identify the Technical Memorandum and to the extent possible sections to which the information

is relevant. Because it will be unwieldy to provide exhaustive analyses with all supporting data within the Technical Memoranda, we will cite all relevant publications and reports used to develop each Technical Memorandum. We ask that materials be submitted with this in mind. We will incorporate new material where appropriate, and provide comments if we did not use other materials.

We thank you in advance for helping to facilitate this process. We are also providing this request to Lisa Croft for distribution to the Federal Caucus and Katherine Cheney for posting on the Biological Opinion remand web site.

Sincerely,

John E. Stein, Ph.D.
Salmon Science Coordinator

cc:

F/NWR - Brian Brown
F/GC - Mark Eames
F/NWC - John Ferguson
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attachment